

Sport Pilot – Nuts & Bolts

What are Sport Pilot Privileges and Limitations?

When operating as a sport pilot, you as the pilot must operate within the following guidelines of the sport pilot certificate:

Privileges

- Fly during the daytime using visual flight rules (VFR). Three statute miles visibility and visual contact with the ground is required.
- Cross-country flying anywhere within the U.S.
- Fly up to 10,000 feet above mean sea level (MSL).
- Fly solo, or with one passenger.
- You can share operating expenses with another person.
- You can fly in Class E and G airspace (and B, C and D with appropriate training).
- As a sport pilot, you are allowed to fly production (standard airworthiness certificate) and experimental amateur-built aircraft that meet the definition of a light-sport aircraft.
- You are allowed to rent special light-sport (S-LSA) aircraft.

Limitations

- You are prohibited from flying in Class A airspace.
- You are prohibited from flying in Class B, C or D airspace until or unless you receive training and a logbook endorsement from an instructor.
- No flights outside U.S. without prior permission from the foreign aviation authority.
- You may not tow any object.
- no flights while carrying a passenger or property for compensation or hire, or for furtherance of a business.

How to Become a Sport Pilot

The first step is to earn your sport pilot certificate. Here are the basics:

- You must be at least 17 years old, or 16 for a glider or balloon license
- Hold a valid /current driver's license or current FAA Third Class medical certificate.
- Pass an FAA sport pilot knowledge test
- Pass an FAA sport pilot practical, or flight test.

Medical Requirements

Private and Recreational pilots are required to pass an FAA third-class medical in order to fly an aircraft solo under the terms and allowances of those two certificates/licenses.

Sport pilots are generally allowed to use their state driver's license to establish medical fitness. This means that they must follow any of the limitations or restrictions listed on their driver's license. Mine state that I need corrective eye lenses in order to operate the vehicles I am licensed to operate. The same goes for my exercising the privileges of a sport pilot.

In addition, every pilot, no matter what rating or license, is required to determine before every flight, that he or she is medically fit to operate their aircraft in a safe manner. No matter what you're flying, your responsibility as a pilot is to determine and ensure that your medical condition in no way compromises your ability to safely control an aircraft, from takeoff to touchdown.